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UNCLAS NEW DELHI 007880

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STATE FOR TFPK01 AND SA; STATE PASS USAID FOR OFDA AND ANE

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: TFPK01: INDIA ANALYZING ITS NEEDS, ACKNOWLEDGES US OFFER OF ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 187437

1. (U) Please see Action Request in Para 4 below.

2. (SBU) In a meeting October 10 with Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran (other topics reported septel), the

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Ambassador conveyed to India the condolences of the United States for the loss of life and injuries sustained as a result of the October 8 earthquake in Kashmir. The Ambassador reiterated the USG's intention to donate \$100,000 to relief efforts right away. He also reminded FS Saran of the Secretary's offer of assistance and conveyed PACOM ADM Fallon's offer of military relief assistance, if required. Finally, he asked Saran not to hesitate to supply a list of needed equipment and supplies.

3. (SBU) Saran thanked the Ambassador for the USG's offers of assistance and said the GOI's Disaster Management Authority was making an assessment of needs. Once that was done, and if gaps were identified, the GOI would contact the USG. In response to our query, Saran said the Pakistani government had not yet accepted India's proffered assistance, but that coordination between the two governments along the Line-of-Control (LOC) was excellent in the wake of the earthquake. Media here have noted that some affected villages in Pakistani Kashmir may be more easily accessible from the Indian side of the LOC.

4. (SBU) COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST: We will keep after the Indians for a more definite sense of their needs, but one compelling area of concern is housing. Snow will start to fall this month in higher reaches of Kashmir on both sides of the LOC, and by late November and early December even low-lying areas will be exposed to snow and freezing conditions. In light of the widespread collapse of structures on both sides of the LOC, aid targeted at helping people secure suitable shelter will be an urgent priority. ACTION REQUEST: We recommend that the USG consider offering the GOI such materials. Such a step -- if publicized in Kashmiri language broadcast and print media -- will also remind citizens of Muslim-majority J&K state that the USG is ready to play a humanitarian role in alleviating their suffering. END COMMENT AND ACTION REQUEST.  
Mulford